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*From Rans -
23 Dec 1965*

Events involving Hellar Grabbi, Viktor Palm (Soviet-Estonian academic)
and Kalju Lepik (An Estonian poet in Sweden)

Sometime in the middle of November 1965 Hellar Grabbi called Jaan Toots, a physicist employed by Bureau of Standards in D.C. and advised him that V. Palm had expressed interest in visiting the Bureau's laboratories. It was revealed that Palm was visiting in Washington, had called Grabbi and had been in his home. Subsequently a call was received by the Bureau from Soviet Embassy requesting permission for Palm to make the visit. At this time the request was refused but Toots is in the opinion that a future request may be granted.

At about the same time Grabbi and Jyri Kork were making preparations in co-operation with various interested Estonian groups for a USA and Canadian tour by an Estonian poet living in Sweden, Kalju Lepik. Lepik's performance would consist of a lecture on the status of Estonian literature and recital of his poems. Lepik had previously criticized the so-called "nationalists" in Canada (Holmstrom team) and rumors had been heard about subsequently about Lepik's radical left-wing leanings.

On December 1 a scheduled presentation by K. Lepik was performed in New York city for about 60 people. Neither the moderator Dr. H. Susi nor K. Lepik knew that in the audience was also V. Palm. After the presentation and discussion of various problems in emigration V. Palm presented himself, delivering a statement in favor of cultural life in Estonia and Soviet Union in general. This surprise appearance resulted in a somewhat heated debate. Although Grabbi was present, he kept unusually quiet. It was later established that Palm had been invited to the meeting by Grabbi. Both the moderator Susi and poet Lepik were very disturbed by lack of advance notice from Grabbi on his guest. Much of the discussion was intimate and would have been conducted in different manner if the presence of Soviet functionary had been known. Jyri Kork is also perturbed because he was the co-organizer of Lepik's lectures with Grabbi and could be blamed for the incursion.

It was later established that Viktor Palm is a dean of organic chemistry at Tartu University, currently on a visit to USA with Grant Institute in New York. He is about 40 and reportedly became communist in his youth, spent the war and a few years following in Russia. Appears to be a meek character with a noticeable Russian accent.

On December 2 K. Lepik had a scheduled presentation in Toronto. Prior to that a full page advertisement appeared in local Estonian newspaper "Meie Elu" by "A Nationalist" accusing Lepik of left wing tendencies etc. The session was held in the Toronto Estonian House. Prior to the meeting handbills were distributed by three men, one of them reportedly Erik Heine. The handbills call Lepik a radical etc. Lepik however received a tremendous applause following his presentation.

Hellar Grabbi has not been available for comment on his association with Palm. Grabbi is at this writing (14 Dec 65) in Toronto on a repeated visit. He claims his presence there is required in connection with publication of a literary magazine "Mana". There is some doubt that his presence for extended periods is absolutely necessary for this purpose alone. Grabbi is known to carry on extensive correspondence with people in Soviet Estonia and has urged a recent visitor there (Mrs. Vellesturm from New York) to contact his acquaintances. He also appears quite interested in Heine affair and knows author Viiralt quite well. Grabbi is known to take off from work for extensive time periods for his visits to New York and Toronto.

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DATE 2008

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Supplementary Report

"Events involving Hellar Grabbi, Viktor Palm and Kalju Lepik"

Hellar Grabbi had returned from Toronto in the morning of 14 Dec. 65 and was contacted by telephone late in the afternoon. Conversation at first dealt with the events in Toronto. Grabbi told that he had met E. Heine at the door of the Estonian House prior to the presentation by poet K. Lepik. Heine was distributing handbills derogatory to Lepik and Grabbi received two copies. Heine was very friendly and mentioned during a brief conversation that the trial with Raus is coming up in a month and that Raus' lawyers are traveling all over the world trying to collect derogatory information about him. Grabbi noted that author Viirlaid seemed to act as a personal body-guard to poet Lepik. During a party at a later date where Mr. and Mrs. Viirlaid were present, Mrs Viirlaid (Heine's sister-in-law) remarked that their relations with Heine had cooled off considerably due to Heine's hate campaign against a number of people. She however offered the explanation that Heine had acquired his antagonistic attitude because of his experiences as a partisan in the forest.

In subsequent conversation Grabbi felt it necessary to ask my opinion about the presence of Soviet academic Viktor Palm during poet Lepik's presentation in New York. When told that a number of people were unhappy about lack of advance warning, Grabbi explained that he had sent an invitation to Palm just to see what happens and that Palm had arrived a little after the meeting began so he could not break into the proceedings. When asked how he met Palm, Grabbi explained that about a month ago Palm came to Washington and contacted Rein Silberberg in order to arrange for a meeting. Silberberg in turn asked Grabbi to come along. They both went to Palm's hotel. There Grabbi proposed to continue the meeting under more convenient surroundings at his home. Palm agreed and taking along a bottle of Georgian cognac the trio proceeded to Grabbi's place. The conversation lasted almost all night during which time Palm had only three drinks. According to Grabbi Palm had many interesting things to tell about Estonian Communist Party, much of which if revealed would be very harmful to Palm. Palm however appeared to be a dedicated communist.

Rein Silberberg was contacted by phone in the evening of 14 Dec. He confirmed Grabbi's story about meeting with Palm. Silberberg is in correspondence with an academic at Tartu University. When this person had heard about Palm's proposed visit to USA, he had given Palm Silberberg's address and asked Palm to look him up. Silberberg left the impression that he had asked Grabbi along because he seems to believe that Grabbi has the necessary experience and official contacts. When asked, Silberberg told that he had contacted his Security Officer afterwards and rendered a report.

Rein Silberberg is in his thirties, recently married. He is an excellent physicist employed by Naval Research Laboratory. He is however very naive and has a very simple personality, very friendly and straightforward in character, apparently quite ignorant on "facts of life"

It was also established that Grabbi had extracted a promise from Jaan Toots (Bureau of Standards) not to mention to anyone that he knew about Palm's visit with Grabbi. Possibly Silberberg was made to give the same promise.

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There are rumors in New York among Grabbi's acquaintances that Raus is receiving financial support from John Birch Society to pay his legal expenses.

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A Translation of Handbill Distributed by
"Maine At the Toronto Estonian"
91 65 Prior to a Presentation by Poet
Kalju Lepik

WHO IS KALJU LEPIK?

- Kalju Lepik is known for his radical views.
 - He belongs to the same group with I. Iliste, I. Grunthal and I. Laaban, who in their speeches during previous visits to Toronto have presented a soft attitude towards communism.
 - He belongs to the so-called "Free Estonia" group. He has published writings in the now extinct periodical "Free Estonia". In the same periodical Rein Taagepera published his article ironical to our republic about the "potato republic". Rein Taagepera and Helmo Raag, who belong to the same group presented a memorandum to U.S.A State Department undermining the legal continuity of the Republic of Estonia. According to the explanation given by Dr. Aun, persons belonging to Free Estonian group had knowledge of this memorandum.
 - He sent together with Ilmar Laaban and Raimond Kolk in the winter of 1964 a sympathy telegram to Spanish communist poet Carlos Alvares because of his imprisonment by Franco regime. (At the same time the Spanish radio, within the framework of "Voice of Free Estonia" was broadcasting encouraging speeches and sounds to homeland Estonians).
 - He made a speech prior to his journey to U.S.A. and Canada in the Swedish Estonian National Council. He had bitter words for Estonians living in emigration, but not a single complaint about the occupants of the homeland. He condemned "the picketing against fellow countrymen who are suffering under the occupation" and complained that "under the pretext of fighting for independent Estonian, people of differing views are persecuted."
 - He is a poet. We'll present a couple of his "pearls in poetry" which characterize his outlook.
- .. a bitter thought goes through the mind;
When Kalev returns to home again,
to drink home-made beer from the cup,
to hang his children by the neck.

.. Come to me little goat,
I'll tie around your neck a cross of iron
on your chest a bloody ribbon.
On the grave a swastika.

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